



US008272349B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Mayes, Jr.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 8,272,349 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Sep. 25, 2012**

(54) **BIRD FEEDING APPARATUS**

(76) Inventor: **Vernon Mayes, Jr.**, Columbia, SC (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 4 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/537,689**

(22) Filed: **Aug. 7, 2009**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2011/0030618 A1 Feb. 10, 2011

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 61/807,328, filed on Aug. 8, 2008.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A01K 39/01 (2006.01)

A01K 5/015 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **119/51.03**; 119/57.8; 119/51.01

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 119/51.03,
119/51.01, 57.8

See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

590,458 A * 9/1897 Lee 119/51.03
1,092,314 A * 4/1914 White 119/51.03

1,123,501 A * 1/1915 Dreibelbis 119/51.01
1,221,019 A * 4/1917 Bowdish 119/51.03
2,504,282 A * 4/1950 Tobias 119/51.03
3,273,537 A * 9/1966 Orr 119/51.03
3,399,650 A 9/1968 Goodman
5,022,349 A 6/1991 Bryant
5,189,985 A * 3/1993 Brady et al. 119/60
5,606,933 A * 3/1997 Wilkins 119/51.03
5,819,687 A * 10/1998 Lister 119/52.1
5,826,541 A * 10/1998 Wilkins 119/57.8
5,867,938 A 2/1999 Dilemia
7,093,563 B1 * 8/2006 Reynolds 119/428
2006/0065207 A1 * 3/2006 Loudon 119/464
2007/0084412 A1 * 4/2007 Eager 119/51.03

* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner — Son T Nguyen

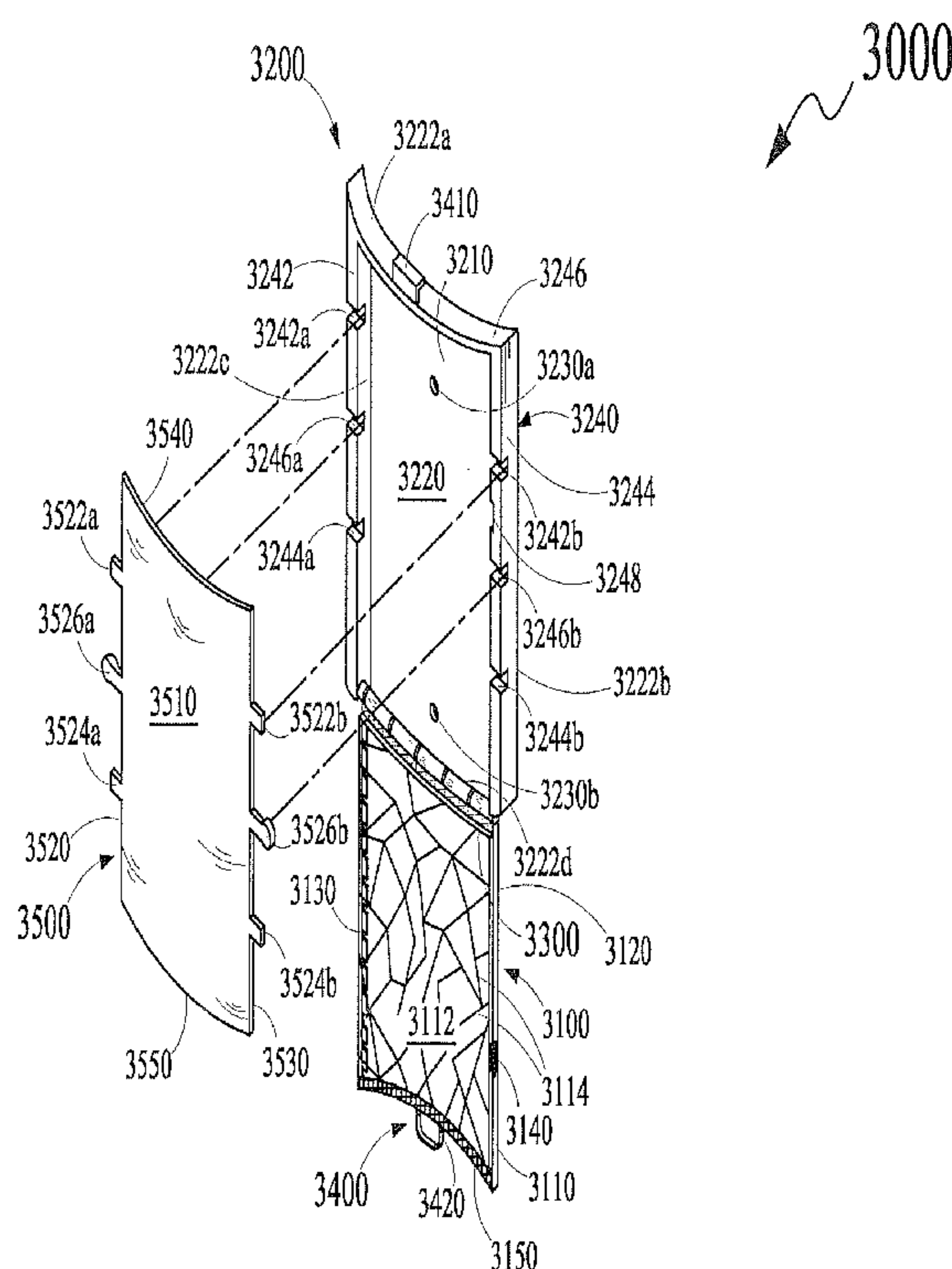
Assistant Examiner — Kathleen Iwasaki

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Aidenbaum Schloff and Bloom PLLC; Jay Schloff

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A bird feeding apparatus for providing nutritious feed material to birds includes a first member and a second member pivotally coupled with the first member. The second member includes a base member and a lip member. The lip member extends upwardly from a first set of edges of the base member. The lip member is circumscribingly received around the first member, when the first member and the second member align with each other.

10 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



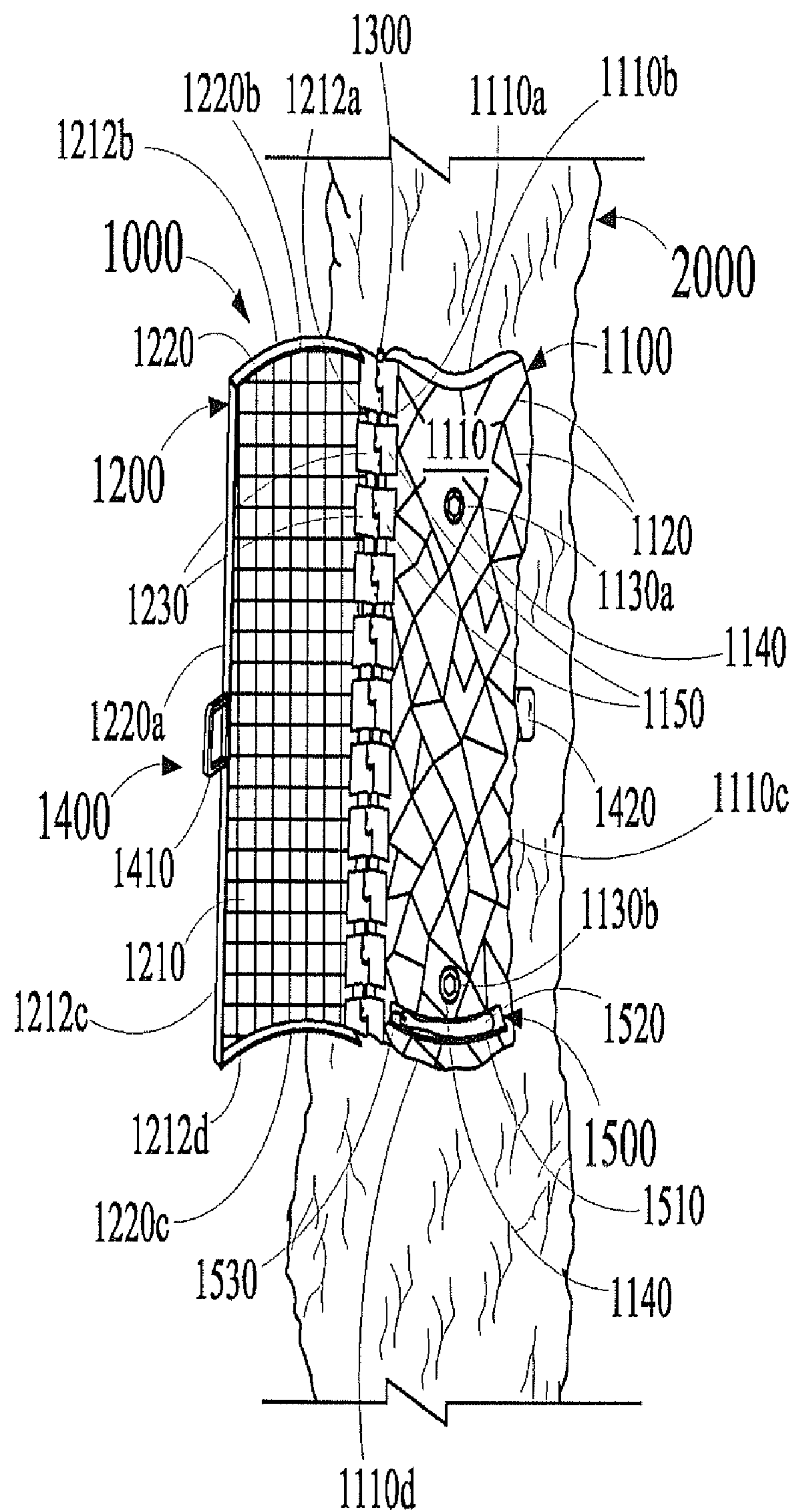


FIG. 1

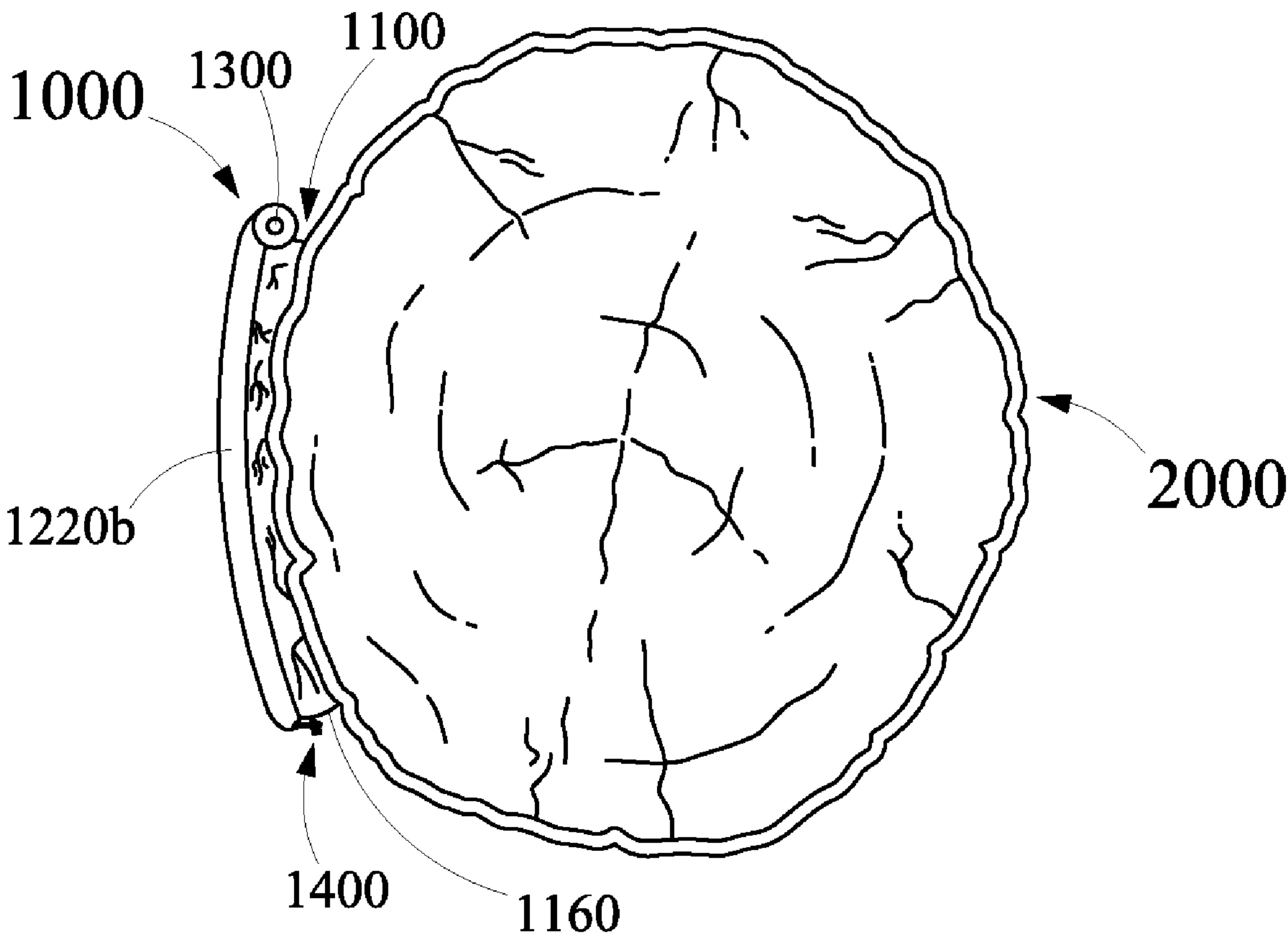


FIG. 2

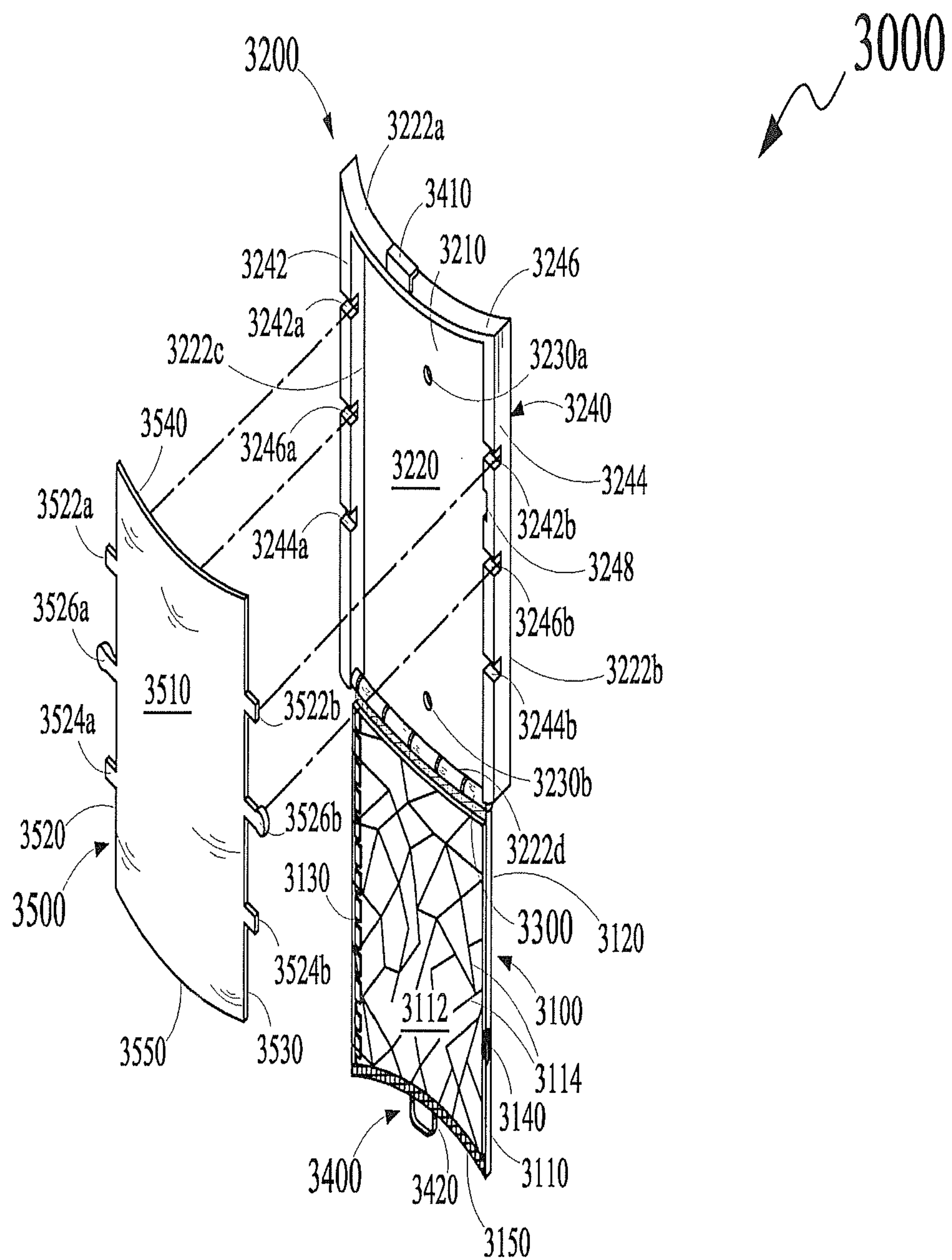


FIG. 3

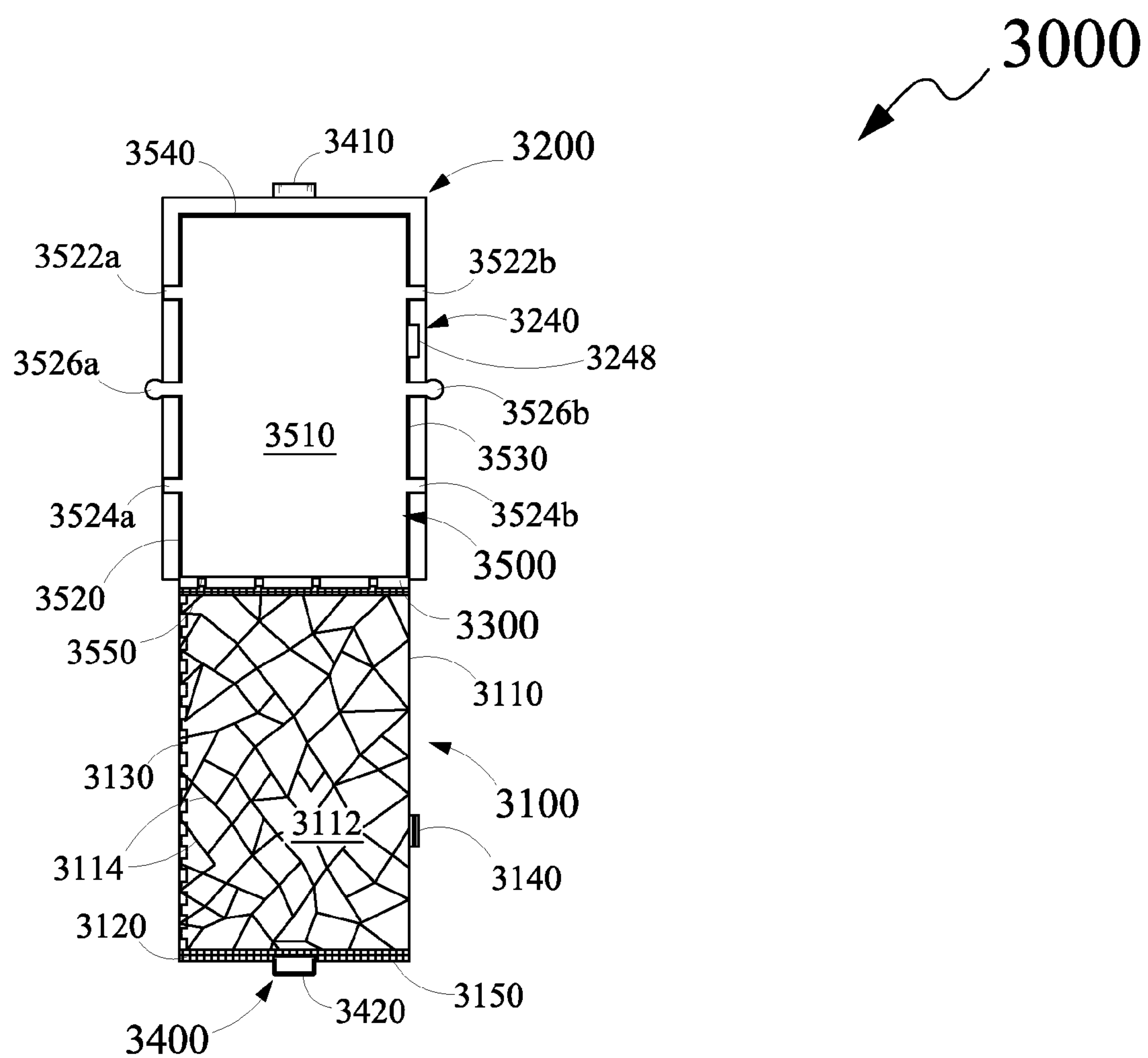


FIG. 4

1

BIRD FEEDING APPARATUS**CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

The present disclosure claims priority under 35 United States Code, Section 119 from the U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/807,328 filed on Aug. 8, 2008, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present disclosure generally relates to animal feeding apparatuses, and, more particularly, to a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of providing a nutritional feed material to birds.

BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

Nowadays, many people have developed bird feeding as an auxiliary activity and a means of entertainment. Various bird feeding apparatuses have also been specifically developed for feeding birds with feed material, such as a variety of seeds. In general, a bird feeding apparatus may be placed in either a backyard or a lawn of a home, to facilitate bird watching by an individual from his or her home. Specifically, the bird feeding apparatus may be suspended from a tree or a post.

Typically, conventional bird feeding apparatuses include feed material, specifically, birdseed kept in a container such as a tray and a bowl, which is provided in the bird feeding apparatus. However, the use of birdseed for feeding birds may prove costly as most birdseed available in the market is expensive.

Further, while eating and/or hoarding, the birds tend to scatter the birdseed on areas including ground in a backyard or a lawn, flower beds, and the like. The birdseed scattered on such various areas may create an unpleasant view for an owner of a house or for visitors. Furthermore, it may be tiresome for an individual to clean such areas having the scattered birdseeds thereon. In addition, the situation may worsen in the event that the scattered birdseed starts germinating, as the birdseeds then tend to accumulate and adhere to the specific areas. Accordingly, cleaning of such areas with the scattered birdseed may prove to be time-consuming for an individual.

Additionally, containers provided in various conventional bird feeding apparatuses for holding the birdseed therewithin are usually of a limited dimension. Accordingly, it may be laborious for an individual to refill the containers time and again with additional birdseed once the previously kept birdseed has been completely consumed by birds.

Moreover, the conventional bird feeding apparatuses are incapable of providing any protection against unwanted scavengers of the feed material. Examples of such scavengers include, but are not limited to, squirrels and other rodents. Accordingly, access to the feed material by such scavengers causes depletion of the feed material for consumption by the birds, thereby defeating the purpose of a bird feeder.

Accordingly, there exists a need for a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of providing nutritious feed material, in a convenient manner. Further, there exists a need for a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of preventing access of feed material stored within the bird feeding apparatus by scavengers, such as squirrels and other rodents. Furthermore, there exists a need for a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of preventing scattering and spilling of feed material on various

2

areas including ground, flower beds, and the like, when the feed material is being consumed or hoarded by a bird.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in the prior art, the general purpose of the present disclosure is to provide a bird feeding apparatus, configured to include all the advantages of the prior art, and to overcome the drawbacks inherent therein.

Therefore, an object of the present disclosure is to provide a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of providing nutritious feed material, in a convenient manner.

Another object of the present disclosure is to provide a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of preventing access of feed material stored within the bird feeding apparatus by scavengers, such as squirrels and other rodents.

Yet another object of the present disclosure is to provide a bird feeding apparatus that is capable of preventing scattering and spilling of feed material on various areas including ground, flower beds, and the like, when the feed material is being consumed or hoarded by a bird.

To achieve the above objects, in one aspect of the present disclosure, a bird feeding apparatus is provided. The bird feeding apparatus includes a first member and a second member pivotally coupled with the first member. The first member includes a plurality of crevices formed thereon for receiving a feed material therewithin. The first member simulates a bark of a tree. The second member includes a base member. The second member further includes a lip member extending upwardly from a first set of edges of the base member. The lip member is circumscribingly received around the first member to enclose a front surface of the first member, when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other.

In another aspect of the present disclosure, a bird feeding apparatus is provided that includes a first member. The first member includes a first flap element that simulates a bark of a tree. The first flap element includes a plurality of crevices formed on the first flap element for receiving a feed material therewithin. Further, the first member includes a second flap element pivotally coupled with the first flap element. The bird feeding apparatus also includes a second member pivotally coupled with the first member. The second member includes a base member and a lip member extending upwardly from a first set of edges of the base member. The lip member is circumscribingly received around the first member to enclose a front surface of the first flap element of the first member, when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other.

These together with other aspects of the present disclosure, along with the various features of novelty that characterize the present disclosure, are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed hereto and form a part of this present disclosure. For a better understanding of the present disclosure, its operating advantages, and the specific objects attained by its uses, reference should be made to the accompanying drawings and descriptive matter in which there are illustrated exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The advantages and features of the present disclosure will become better understood with reference to the following detailed description and claims taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like elements are identified with like symbols, and in which:

3

FIG. 1 depicts a front perspective view of a bird feeding apparatus in an open configuration, secured on a supporting structure, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 depicts a top view of the bird feeding apparatus of FIG. 1 in a closed configuration, secured onto a supporting structure, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 3 depicts an exploded view of a bird feeding apparatus, in accordance with another embodiment of the present disclosure; and

FIG. 4 depicts a front view of the bird feeding apparatus of FIG. 3, in a partially open configuration, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

Like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the description of several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DISCLOSURE

The exemplary embodiments described herein detail for illustrative purposes are subject to many variations in structure and design. It should be emphasized, however, that the present disclosure is not limited to a particular bird feeding apparatus, as shown and described. It is understood that various omissions and substitutions of equivalents are contemplated as circumstances may suggest or render expedient, but these are intended to cover the application or implementation without departing from the spirit or scope of the claims of the present disclosure. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. The use of terms, “including,” or “comprising,” and variations thereof herein is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items.

The terms “first,” “second,” and the like, herein do not denote any order, quantity, or importance, but rather are used to distinguish one element from another, and the terms “a” and “an” herein do not denote a limitation of quantity, but rather denote the presence of at least one of the referenced item.

Unless limited otherwise, the terms “attached,” “secured,” “coupled,” and variations thereof herein are used broadly and encompass direct and indirect attachments, couplings, and arrangements. The term, “top,” “bottom,” “side,” and the like, herein do not denote any order, elevation or importance, but rather are used to distinguish placement of one element over another.

The present disclosure relates to a bird feeding apparatus for providing nutritious feed material to birds. The term “bird” as used herein relates to birds such as woodpeckers, wrens, finches, chickadees, and sparrows. Further, the term “feed material” relates to nutritious and semi-solid food material including, but not limited to, peanut butter, jelly, butterscotch, and combinations thereof, meant to be consumed by birds. Furthermore, the term “user,” as used herein below, refers to an owner of the bird feeding apparatus or an individual using the bird feeding apparatus for feeding birds.

The bird feeding apparatus of the present disclosure provides nutritious feed material to birds in a convenient manner. Further, use of the bird feeding apparatus prevents scavengers, such as squirrels and other rodents, from accessing the feed material stored therewithin. Furthermore, the use of the bird feeding apparatus prevents scattering and spilling of the feed material on various areas including ground, flower beds, and the like, when the feed material is being consumed or hoarded by the birds. Specifically, the feed material as used

4

herein is incapable of being dripped or scattered. Different embodiments of the bird feeding apparatus of the present disclosure are explained in detail in conjunction with FIGS. 1-4.

An embodiment of the present disclosure is explained in detail in conjunction with FIGS. 1 and 2. FIG. 1 depicts a front perspective view of a bird feeding apparatus 1000 in an open configuration, mounted on a supporting structure 2000, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. Further, FIG. 2 depicts a top view of the bird feeding apparatus 1000 in a closed configuration, mounted on the supporting structure 2000, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

The bird feeding apparatus 1000 includes a first member 1100 and a second member 1200 (as shown in FIG. 1). The first member 1100 includes a front surface 1110 and a rear surface (not shown). Further, the first member 1100 includes a plurality of crevices 1120 formed on the first member 1100, and more specifically, on the front surface 1110 of the first member 1100 for receiving a feed material (not shown) therewithin. Each crevice of the plurality of crevices 1120 may have a shape of a diamond. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the each crevice may have any other shape, such as a triangular shape, a rectangular shape, and the like. Further, the each crevice may be formed to have a depth of about $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. In the present embodiment of the present disclosure, the first member 1100 simulates a bark of a tree. More specifically, the first member 1100 simulates a bark of a hickory tree, i.e., the first member 1100 is configured as a simulated slab of a hickory tree. Further, the first member 1100 is composed of a hard plastic material. Examples of such a hard plastic material may include, but are not limited to, polypropylene plastic material and polystyrene plastic material. However, it may be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first member 1100 may be composed of any other material such as an aluminium material.

The first member 1100 also includes at least one aperture such as a first aperture 1130a and a second aperture 1130b (hereinafter collectively referred to as apertures 1130) configured thereon. Each aperture of the apertures 1130 is configured to receive a fastener 1140 therewithin for securing the bird feeding apparatus 1000, and more specifically, the first member 1100, onto the supporting structure 2000. The term, “supporting structure,” as used herein refers to a tree. However, it may be evident to a person skilled in the art that the supporting structure 2000 may be a post or any other supporting structure that may be used for securing the bird feeding apparatus 1000.

The second member 1200 of the bird feeding apparatus 1000 includes a base member 1210 having a plurality of edges such as an edge 1212a, an edge 1212b, an edge 1212c, and an edge 1212d (as shown in FIG. 1). The plurality of edges including the edge 1212a, the edge 1212b, the edge 1212c, and the edge 1212d, may hereinafter be collectively referred to as “plurality of edges 1212”. In the present embodiment of the present disclosure, the base member 1210 of the second member 1200 is composed as a sheet of a mesh structure, such as a wire mesh structure, to facilitate a bird to easily cling onto the second member 1200. The mesh structure may be composed of one of a metallic material and a metallic alloy material. For the purpose of this description, the base member 1210 of the second member 1200 is a wire mesh structure composed of galvanized wires.

The second member 1200 is pivotally coupled with the first member 1100 (as shown in FIG. 1). More specifically, the second member 1200 is pivotally coupled with the first member 1100 by means of a hinge pin mechanism that includes a

5

plurality of hinge brackets, such as a plurality of hinge brackets **1150** (hereinafter referred to as “first hinge brackets **1150**”) a plurality of hinge brackets **1230** (hereinafter referred to as “second hinge brackets **1230**”), and a hinge pin **1300**. Specifically, the first hinge brackets **1150** are disposed on a first edge **1110a** of a plurality of edges such as the edge **1110a**, an edge **1110b**, an edge **1110c**, and an edge **1110d**, of the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**. The second hinge brackets **1230** are disposed on the edge **1212a** of the base member **1210** of the second member **1200**. The first hinge brackets **1150** and the second hinge brackets **1230** engage with each other to configure a cavity (not shown) therebetween to receive the hinge pin **1300** within the cavity. The hinge pin mechanism enables the pivotal movement of the second member **1200** with respect to the first member **1100**.

As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the first member **1100** and the second member **1200** are configured to have a concave shape to conform to the convex shape of the outer surface of a tree. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first member **1100** and the second member **1200** may be configured to have any other shape depending on the shape of the supporting structure **2000**.

Further, the second member **1200** partially covers the first member **1100** when the second member **1200** and the first member **1100** are aligned with each other. Specifically, the second member **1200** covers the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**. The second member **1200** includes a lip member **1220**. The lip member **1220** extends upwardly from a first set of edges such as the edge **1212b**, the edge **1212c**, and the edge **1212d** of the plurality of edges **1212** of the base member **1210**. The lip member **1220** includes a plurality of portions such as a first portion **1220a**, a second portion **1220b**, and a third portion **1220c**. The lip member **1220** is circumscribingly received around the first member **1100** to enclose the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**, when the second member **1200** and the first member **1100** align with each other. More specifically, the first portion **1220a**, the second portion **1220b**, and the third portion **1220c** of the lip member **1220** are received around the first member **1100** when the second member **1200** aligns with the first member **1100** for covering the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**. Even more specifically, the first portion **1220a**, the second portion **1220b**, and the third portion **1220c** of the lip member **1220** are received on a side portion (not numbered) of the first member **1100** when the second member **1200** aligns with the first member **1100** for covering the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**. Accordingly, the lip member **1220** prevents scavengers/animals, such as squirrels and other rodents, from accessing the feed material provided within the bird feeding apparatus **1000** for consumption by the birds.

The bird feeding apparatus **1000** further includes one or more closure mechanisms such as a closure mechanism **1400** for releasably securing the second member **1200** to the first member **1100** for facilitating the lip member **1220** to enclose the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. More specifically, the closure mechanism **1400** includes a first engagement member such as a first engagement member **1410** configured on the first portion **1220a** of the lip member **1220**. The closure mechanism **1400** further includes a second engagement member such as a second engagement member **1420** configured on a side portion **1160** of the first member **1100** (as shown in FIG. 2). It will be evident that the first engagement member **1410** and the second engagement member **1420** may be configured on the lip member **1220** and the first member **1100** by a means such as an adhesive, and the like, as known in the art. Further, it will

6

be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first engagement member **1410** may be configured on any other portion of the lip member **1220** and the second engagement member **1420** may be configured on a corresponding side portion of the first member **1100**.

The first engagement member **1410** engages with the second engagement member **1420** when the second member **1200** is aligned with the first member **1100** for facilitating the lip member **1220** to enclose the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100** (as shown in FIG. 2). Examples of the closure mechanism **1400** may include, but are not limited to, a snap fit mechanism and a latch and clasp mechanism. For the purpose of this description and as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the closure mechanism **1400** is a latch and clasp mechanism, where the first engagement member **1410** is a latch and the second engagement member **1420** is a clasp.

Furthermore, the bird feeding apparatus **1000** includes an applicator assembly **1500**. The applicator assembly **1500** includes a holder member **1510** and an applicator **1520** for applying the feed material onto the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**. The holder member **1510** is capable of holding the applicator **1520** thereon (as shown in FIG. 1). The holder member **1510** is disposed on the first member **1100**. In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the applicator assembly **1500**, and more specifically, the holder member **1510** is disposed on, and particularly, attached near the bottom edge of the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100** by means of an adhesive. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the holder member **1510** may be attached to the first member **1100** by any other means known in the art. For example, the holder member **1510** may be attached to the first member **1100** by means of one or more nuts and bolts. Further, the applicator **1520** is releasably attached to the holder member **1510** by any suitable means, such as using a string **1530**. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the applicator **1520** may be attached to the holder member **1510** by means of a rope, hooks, clips and the like. The applicator **1520** and the holder member **1510** may be composed of a plastic material. Alternatively, as described above, the applicator assembly **1500** may be similarly attached to either inside or the outside of the second member **1200**, at a bottom portion thereof.

In use, a user may secure the bird feeding apparatus **1000**, and more particularly, the first member **1100** to the supporting structure **2000** (as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2), by means of fasteners, such as the fastener **1140**, that extend through the apertures **1130** and are received within a portion (not shown) of the supporting structure **2000**. Thereafter, the user may spread the feed material, and more specifically, peanut butter onto the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100** with the help of the applicator **1520**, such that the plurality of crevices **1120** configured on the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100** receive the feed material therewithin; and replace the applicator **1520** to the holder member **1510**. The user may then cover the first member **1100**, and more specifically, the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100** with the second member **1200**. Specifically, the second member **1200** may be releasably secured to the first member **1100** by means of the closure mechanism **1400**. More specifically, the first engagement member **1410** of the closure mechanism **1400** is engaged with the second engagement member **1420** of the closure mechanism **1400**. The mesh structure of the base member **1210** of the second member **1200** enables one or more birds to cling on to the second member **1200** for conveniently accessing and consuming/hoarding the feed material provided on the front surface **1110** and the plurality of crevices **1120** of the first member **1100**. The employment of

the lip member **1220** of the second member **1200**, which is received on the side portion of the first member **1100** for enclosing the front surface **1110** of the first member **1100**, helps preventing various scavengers/animals, such as squirrels and other rodents, from accessing and consuming the feed material intended to be accessed and consumed by the one or more birds.

The bird feeding apparatus **1000** may be manufactured in a variety of sizes. For example, the first member **1100** of the bird feeding apparatus **1000** may have a width of about six inches, a length of about twelve inches, and a height of about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Further, the lip member **1220** may have a height of about half an inch. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the bird feeding apparatus **1000** may be manufactured to have any other dimension as per a user's preferences and/or as per the manufacturer's preferences.

Another embodiment of the present disclosure is explained in detail in conjunction with FIGS. **3** and **4**. FIG. **3** depicts an exploded view of a bird feeding apparatus **3000**, in accordance with this embodiment of the present disclosure. FIG. **4** depicts a front view of the bird feeding apparatus **3000**, in a partially open configuration, in accordance with the above embodiment of the present disclosure.

The bird feeding apparatus **3000** includes a first member **3100**, and a second member **3200**. The first member **3100** includes a first flap element **3110** and a second flap element **3120**. The first flap element **3110** is hingedly coupled with the second flap element **3120** by means of a hinge pin mechanism **3130**. The hinge pin mechanism **3130** is disposed between a first side portion (not numbered) of the first flap element **3110** and a corresponding first side portion (not numbered) of the second flap element **3120**. The hinge pin mechanism **3130** is similar to the hinge pin mechanism as described in conjunction with FIG. **1**. For the sake of brevity, the hinge pin mechanism **3130** is not explained herein. The first flap element **3110** includes a front surface **3112** and a rear surface (not shown). Further, the first flap element **3110** includes a plurality of crevices **3114** formed thereon and extending from the front surface **3112** to the rear surface while forming through holes on the first flap element **3110**. The plurality of crevices **3114** is formed on the first flap element **3110** for receiving a feed material (not shown) therewithin. Each crevice of the plurality of crevices **3114** has a shape of a diamond. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the each crevice of the plurality of crevices **3114** may be designed to have any other shape, such as a triangular shape, a rectangular shape, and the like.

Such an arrangement of the plurality of crevices **3114** on the first flap element **3110** facilitates the first flap element **3110** to simulate a bark of a tree. In the present embodiment of the present disclosure, the first flap element **3110** simulates a bark of a hickory tree. Specifically, the first flap element **3110** is configured as a simulated slab of a hickory tree. The first flap element **3110** is composed of a hard plastic material. Examples of the hard plastic material may include, but are not limited to, polypropylene plastic material and polystyrene plastic material. However, it may be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first flap element **3110** may be composed of any other material such as an aluminium material.

In the present embodiment of the present disclosure, the second flap element **3120** of the first member **3100** is composed as a sheet of a mesh structure, such as a wire mesh structure, to facilitate a bird in easily holding onto the second flap element **3120**. The second flap element **3120** serves as a cover of the first flap element **3110**. The mesh structure may be composed of one of a metallic material and a metallic alloy

material. For the purpose of this description, the second flap element **3120** of the first member **3100** is a wire mesh structure composed of galvanized wires.

The first member **3100** further includes one or more fastening mechanisms such as a fastening mechanism **3140** for releasably securing the first flap element **3110** to the second flap element **3120**, as shown in FIGS. **3** and **4**. More specifically, the fastening mechanism **3140** includes a first fastening member (not numbered) configured on a second side portion (not numbered) of the first flap element **3110**. The fastening mechanism **3140** further includes a second fastening member (not numbered) configured on a corresponding second side portion (not numbered) of the second flap element **3120**. It will be evident that the first fastening member and the second fastening member may be configured on the first flap element **3110** and the second flap element **3120** by a means such as an adhesive, and the like, as known in the art. The first fastening member engages with the second fastening member when the first flap element **3110** is aligned with the second flap element **3120** (as shown in FIGS. **3** and **4**). Examples of the fastening mechanism **3140** may include, but are not limited to, a snap fit mechanism and a latch and clasp mechanism.

The second member **3200** of the bird feeding apparatus **3000** includes a base member **3210** (as shown in FIG. **3**). The base member **3210** includes a front surface **3220** and a rear surface (not shown). The base member **3210** includes at least one aperture, such as a first aperture **3230a** and a second aperture **3230b** (hereinafter referred as apertures **3230**) configured thereon. Specifically, the apertures **3230** extend from the front surface **3220** to the rear surface of the base member **3210**. Each aperture of the apertures **3230** receives a fastener (not shown) for securing the base member **3210** onto a supporting structure, such as a tree (not shown). However, it may be evident to a person skilled in the art that the supporting structure may be a post, or any other supporting structure that is capable of securing the bird feeding apparatus **3000** thereon.

The second member **3200** is pivotally coupled with the first member **3100**. More specifically, the second member **3200** is pivotally coupled with the first member **3100** by means of a hinge mechanism **3300**. However, it may be evident to a person skilled in the art that the hinge mechanism **3300** may be a hinge pin mechanism, such as the hinge pin mechanism as explained in conjunction with FIGS. **1** and **2**. Further, as shown in FIG. **3**, the first member **3100** and the second member **3200** are configured to have a concave shape. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first member **3100** and the second member **3200** may be configured to have any other shape depending on the shape of the supporting structure.

Furthermore, the first member **3100** is capable of being received on the second member **3200** when the second member **3200** and the first member **3100** are aligned with each other. Specifically, the second member **3200** includes a lip member **3240** (as shown in FIG. **3**). The lip member **3240** extends upwardly from a first set of edges such as an edge **3222a**, an edge **3222b**, and an edge **3222c** of a plurality of edges such as the edge **3222a**, the edge **3222b**, the edge **3222c**, and an edge **3222d** of the front surface **3220** of the base member **3210**. The plurality of edges such as the edge **3222a**, the edge **3222b**, the edge **3222c**, and the edge **3222d** of the front surface **3220** of the base member **3210** are hereinafter collectively referred to as "plurality of edges **3222**".

As described above, the lip member **3240** extends upwardly from the edge **3222a**, the edge **3222b**, and the edge **3222c** of the front surface **3220** of the base member **3210**. The lip member **3240** is circumscribingly received around the first

member **3100** to enclose the front surface **3112** of the first flap element **3110** of the first member **3100** when the second member **3200** and the first member **3100** align with each other. The lip member **3240** includes a plurality of portions such as a first portion **3242**, second portion **3244**, which is configured opposite to the first portion **3242**, and a third portion **3246**. The first portion **3242** and the second portion **3244** are positioned in a space apart relation, such that the first portion **3242**, the second portion **3244**, and the third portion **3246** form an enclosed space (not numbered) therewithin, in order to facilitate the second member **3200** to assume a shape of a box with one open end portion (not numbered) at the edge **3222d** that configures the hinge mechanism **3300** thereon.

The lip member **3240** further includes at least one first pair of slots disposed symmetrically about the vertical axis of the lip member **3240**. For the purpose of this description, the lip member **3240** includes two of such first pair of slots. Each first pair of slots of the at least one first pair of slots further includes a first slot, such as a first slot **3242a** and a first slot **3244a**, formed on the first portion **3242** of the lip member **3240**. Further, the each first pair of slots of the at least one first pair of slots further includes a second slot such as a second slot **3242b** and a second slot **3244b**, formed on the second portion **3244** of the lip member **3240**.

The lip member **3240** also includes at least one second pair of slots disposed symmetrically about the vertical axis of the lip member **3240**. For the purpose of this description, the lip member **3240** includes one of such second pair of slots. Each second pair of slots of the at least one second pair of slots further includes a third slot, such as a third slot **3246a** formed on the first portion **3242** of the lip member **3240**. Further, the each second pair of slots of the at least one second pair of slots further includes a fourth slot such as a fourth slot **3246b** formed on the second portion **3244** of the lip member **3240**.

Furthermore, the lip member **3240** includes a slot **3248** formed on the second portion **3244** of the lip member **3240**. The slot **3248** receives the fastening mechanism **3140** when the first member **3100** aligns with the second member **3200**.

The bird feeding apparatus **3000** further includes one or more closure mechanisms, such as a closure mechanism **3400**, for releasably securing the first member **3100** to the second member **3200** (as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4). More specifically, the closure mechanism **3400** includes a first engagement member, such as a first engagement member **3410**, configured on the third portion **3246** of the lip member **3240**. The closure mechanism **3400** further includes a second engagement member, such as a second engagement member **3420**, configured on a side portion **3150** of the first member **3100**, and more specifically, of the second flap element **3120** of the first member **3100**. It will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first engagement member **3410** and the second engagement member **3420** may be configured on the lip member **3240** and the first member **3100** by a means, such as an adhesive and the like, as known in the art. Further, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the first engagement member **3410** may be configured on any other portion of the lip member **3240** and the second engagement member **3420** may be configured on a corresponding side portion of the first member **3100**. The first engagement member **3410** engages with the second engagement member **3420** when the first member **3100** is aligned with the second member **3200** to facilitate the lip member **3240** to enclose the front surface **3112** of the first flap element **3110** of the first member **3100**.

Examples of the closure mechanism **3400** may include, but is not limited to a snap fit mechanism, and a latch and clasp mechanism. For the purpose of this description and as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, the closure mechanism **3400** is a latch and

clasp mechanism, where the first engagement member **3410** is a clasp and the second engagement member **3420** is a latch.

The bird feeding apparatus **3000** also includes a tray member **3500** (as shown in FIG. 3) slidably coupled with the second member **3200**. The tray member **3500** is capable of carrying the feed material applied on a front surface **3510** thereof. Further, the tray member **3500** includes a plurality of side portions such as a first side portion **3520**, a second side portion **3530**, a third side portion **3540**, and a fourth side portion **3550**. Furthermore, the tray member **3500** includes at least one pair of protruding elements. Each pair of protruding elements of the at least one pair of protruding elements includes a first protruding element, such as a first protruding element **3522a** and a first protruding element **3524a**, disposed on the first side portion **3520** of the tray member **3500**. Further, the each pair of protruding elements of the at least one pair of protruding elements includes a second protruding element, such as a second protruding element **3522b** and a second protruding element **3524b**, disposed on the second side portion **3530** of the tray member **3500**. Each protruding element of the each pair of protruding elements serves as a gliding element. The tray member **3500** also includes at least one pair of pull knob elements. Each pair of pull knob elements of the at least one pair of pull knob elements includes a first pull knob element **3526a** disposed on the first side portion **3520** and a second pull knob element **3526b** disposed on the second side portion **3530** of the tray member **3500**.

Furthermore, as shown in FIG. 4, the tray member **3500** is slidably coupled with the second member **3200**. Specifically, the tray member **3500** is slidably coupled with the second member **3200** such that the at least one first pair of slots and the at least one second pair of slots of the lip member **3240** receive the at least one pair of protruding elements and the at least one pair of pull knob elements of the tray member **3500**, respectively. More specifically, the first slots **3242a** and **3244a**, and the second slots **3242b** and **3244b** receive the first protruding elements **3522a** and **3524a**, and the second protruding elements **3522b** and **3524b**, respectively. Further, the third slot **3246a** and the fourth slot **3246b** are allowed to receive the first pull knob element **3526a** and the second pull knob element **3526b**, respectively. Accordingly, the tray member **3500** fits snugly within the plurality of portions of the lip member **3240** of the second member **3200** for facilitating a slidable coupling of the tray member **3500** with the second member **3200**.

For the purpose of this description, each of the first pull knob element **3526a** and the second pull knob element **3526b** includes a pull knob portion (not numbered) and an elongated portion (not numbered). Specifically, elongated portions of the first pull knob element **3526a** and the second pull knob element **3526b** are received within the third slot **3246a** and the fourth slot **3246b**, respectively. Further, pull knob portions of the first pull knob element **3526a** and the second pull knob element **3526b** extend outwardly from the third slot **3246a** and the fourth slot **3246b**, respectively, to be held by a user for slidably decoupling/pulling-out the tray member **3500** from the second member **3200**.

In use, a user may secure the second member **3200** to the supporting structure, by means of two fasteners that extend through the apertures **3230** and are received within portions (not shown) of the supporting structure. Thereafter, the user may spread the feed material, and more specifically, peanut butter, onto the front surface **3510** of the tray member **3500** with the help of an applicator, such as the applicator **1520** as explained in FIG. 1, in a quick and easy manner. Subsequently, the tray member **3500** carrying the feed material on the front surface **3510** thereof is slidably coupled with the

11

second member **3200**. Thereafter, the first member **3100** is aligned with the second member **3200** such that the front surface **3510** of the tray member **3500** faces the front surface **3112** of the first flap element **3110** of the first member **3100**. Further, the second member **3200** may be releasably secured with the first member **3100** by means of the closure mechanism **3400**. More specifically, the first engagement member **3410** of the closure mechanism **3400** is engaged with the second engagement member **3420** of the closure mechanism **3400**.

The feed material carried on the front surface **3510** of the tray member **3500** is received within the plurality of crevices **3114** of the first flap element **3110** of the first member **3100** when the second member **3200** and the first member **3100** are aligned with each other and further secured, such that one or more birds may access the feed material from within the plurality of crevices **3114** either for consumption or for hoarding. Specifically, the feed material seeps into the plurality of crevices **3114** when the second member **3200** and the first member **3100** are aligned with each other. Accordingly, the first member **3100** serves as a cover, which snugly fits within the enclosed space provided by the lip member **3240** once the tray member **3500** is slidably coupled with the second member **3200**, for facilitating the feed material to be seeped through the first member **3100**.

The bird feeding apparatus **3000** may be fabricated in a variety of sizes. Preferably, the first flap element **3110** of the first member **3100** of the bird feeding apparatus **3000** may have a thickness of about $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Further, the lip member **3240** may have a height of about half an inch. However, it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that the bird feeding apparatus **3000** may be manufactured to have any other dimension as per a user's preferences and/or as per the manufacturer's preferences.

The disclosed bird feeding apparatuses, such as the bird feeding apparatus **1000** and the bird feeding apparatus **3000**, of the present disclosure are capable of providing nutritious feed material to one or more birds in a convenient manner. The bird feeding apparatuses are characteristic of exhibiting a natural appearance and are capable of being employed in any landscape areas. Also, the bird feeding apparatuses are capable of being quickly and easily installed on a supporting structure, such as a tree. Further, the use of the bird feeding apparatuses is cost-effective, as the feed material such as peanut butter, utilized in the bird feeding apparatuses is inexpensive and easy-to-apply. Furthermore, the use of the bird feeding apparatuses prevents access of the feed material stored therewithin by scavengers/animals, such as squirrels and other rodents. Moreover, the use of the bird feeding apparatuses of the present disclosure prevents scattering and spilling of the feed material on various areas including ground, flower beds, and the like, when the feed material is being consumed or hoarded by a bird.

Moreover, large amount of the feed material may be provided at one instance within the bird feeder apparatuses of the present disclosure. Specifically, one serving of the feed material may last for many days when the bird feeder apparatus **1000** is utilized for bird feeding. On the other hand, one serving of the feed material may last for months when the bird feeder apparatus **3000** is utilized for bird feeding. Additionally, birds may enjoy while consuming the feed material provided by the means of the bird feeding apparatuses of the present disclosure and may regularly desire to return to the respective locations of the bird feeding apparatuses. Specifically, birds enjoy pecking through a caged structure formed with the employment of the second member **1200** in case of

12

the bird feeding apparatus **1000**, or with the employment of the first member **3100** in case of the bird feeding apparatus **3000**.

The foregoing descriptions of specific embodiments of the present disclosure have been presented for purposes of illustration and description. They are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the present disclosure to the precise forms disclosed, and obviously many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the present disclosure and its practical application, and to thereby enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the present disclosure and various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated. It is understood that various omissions and substitutions of equivalents are contemplated as circumstances may suggest or render expedient, but such omissions and substitutions are intended to cover the application or implementation without departing from the spirit or scope of the claims of the present disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. A bird feeding apparatus comprising:

a first member comprising a plurality of crevices formed on the first member for receiving a feed material there-within, wherein the first member simulates a bark of a tree;

a second member pivotally coupled with the first member, the second member comprising,

a base member, and

a lip member extending upwardly from a first set of edges of the base member, wherein the lip member circumscribingly receives the first member to enclose a front surface of the first member, when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other,

such that the plurality of crevices limit the amount of feed material accessible for feeding a bird when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other; and

a tray member slidably coupled with the second member, the tray member being capable of carrying the feed material on a front surface of the tray member, wherein the front surface of the tray member faces the front surface of the first member when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other, such that the feed material is received within the plurality of crevices formed on the first member;

wherein the tray member comprises at least one pair of protruding elements, each pair of protruding elements of the at least one pair of protruding elements comprising, a first protruding element disposed on a first side portion of the tray member, and a second protruding element disposed on a second side portion of the tray member and at least one pair of pull knob elements, each pair of pull knob elements of the at least one pair of pull knob elements comprising, a first pull knob element disposed on the first side portion of the tray member, and a second pull knob element disposed on the second side portion of the tray member.

2. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 1, further comprising one or more closure mechanisms for releasably securing the second member with the first member, each of the one or more closure mechanisms comprising,

a first engagement member configured on the lip member, and a second engagement member configured on the first member,

13

wherein the first engagement member engages with the second engagement member when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other.

3. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first member is composed of a plastic material.

4. A bird feeding apparatus comprising:

a first member comprising,

a first flap element comprising a plurality of crevices formed on the first flap element for receiving a feed material therewithin, wherein the first flap element simulates a bark of a tree, and

a second flap element coupled with the first flap element;

a second member pivotally coupled with the first member, the second member comprising,

a base member, and

a lip member extending upwardly from a first set of edges of the base member, wherein the lip member circumscribingly receives the first member to enclose a front surface of the first flap element of the first member, when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other,

such that the plurality of crevices limit the amount of feed material accessible for feeding a bird when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other; and

a tray member slidably coupled with the second member, the tray member being capable of carrying the feed material on a front surface of the tray member, wherein the front surface of the tray member faces the front surface of the first flap element of the first member when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other, such that the feed material is received within the plurality of crevices formed on the first flap element of the first member;

wherein the tray member comprises at least one pair of protruding elements, each pair of protruding elements of the at least one pair of protruding elements comprising, a first protruding element disposed on a first side portion of the tray member, and a second protruding element disposed on a second side portion of the tray member and at least one pair of pull knob elements, each pair of pull knob elements of the at least one pair of pull knob elements comprising, a first pull knob element disposed on the first side portion of the tray member, and a second pull knob element disposed on the second side portion of the tray member.

14

5. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 4, wherein the lip member comprises,

at least one first pair of slots, each first pair of slots of the at least one first pair of slots comprising,

a first slot formed on a first portion of the lip member for receiving the first protruding element therewithin, and

a second slot formed on a second portion of the lip member for receiving the second protruding element therewithin; and

at least one second pair of slots, each second pair of slots of the at least one second pair of slots comprising,

a third slot formed on the first portion of the lip member for receiving the first pull knob element therewithin, and

a fourth slot formed on the second portion of the lip member for receiving the second pull knob element therewithin,

wherein the first portion of the lip member is configured opposite to the second portion of the lip member in a spaced apart relation.

6. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 4, wherein the second member further comprises at least one aperture configured on the base member, each aperture of the at least one aperture being capable of receiving a fastener for securing the second member onto a supporting structure.

7. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 4, wherein the second flap element of the first member is composed as a sheet of a mesh structure.

8. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 7, wherein the mesh structure is composed of one of a metallic material and a metallic alloy material.

9. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 4, wherein the first member further comprises one or more fastening mechanisms for releasably securing the first flap element with the second flap element.

10. The bird feeding apparatus of claim 4, further comprising one or more closure mechanisms for releasably securing the second member with the first member, each of the one or more closure mechanisms comprising,

a first engagement member configured on the lip member, and

a second engagement member configured on the second flap element of the first member,

wherein the first engagement member engages with the second engagement member when the first member and the second member are aligned with each other.

* * * * *